
Mr. *Chauncy's*

S E R M O N

On the D E A T H

O F

Judge *BYFIELD.*

37

THE CHANCERY

THE CHANCERY



SEE

ON THE DEATH

OF

Judge BYFIELD.

THE CHANCERY

NATHANAEL's *Character display'd.*

A
S E R M O N,

Preach'd

The LORD's Day after the Funeral

of the HONOURABLE

Nathanael Byfield Esq;

Late

Judge of the *Vice-Admiralty,*

And

One of His Majesty's Council

for this Province.

Who died at his House in BOSTON,

on the 6th of June, 1733.

In the 80th Year of his Age.

By *Charles Chauncy, M. A.*

One of the Pastors of the *Old Church.*

Isaiah iii. 1---3. *For behold, the LORD, the LORD*
of Hosts, doth take away from JERUSALEM and
from JUDAH, the Judge ---- and the Prudent,
and the Ancient --- and the Honourable Man ---
and the Counsellor --- and the Eloquent Orator.

Printed in the Year 1733.

NATHANIEL's Certificate of Birth

A

2 E R M O N

Printed

The LORD's Day after the Festival

of the Ascension

of the Year of our Lord



One of His Majesty's Council

for the Province

Who died at his House in Boston

on the 21st of June, 1737

In the 20th Year of his Age

By Charles Chauncy, M. A.

One of the Teachers of the New Church

Printed by J. M. Smith, at the New Church, in Boston, 1737.

In the Year 1737

Preface.

THE following Sermon being preach'd by my worthy Brother & Colleague on occasion of the Decease of an honourable & most valuable aged Person, whose excellent Conduct, both in private & publick Life, thro' a long Series of Years, hath made him shine as an uncommon Light in this degenerate Age; I cannot but take a Pleasure in the Hope, that as a lasting Honour will be done to the Name of our deceased Friend & Father, so the Glory of GOD, the Credit of Religion, and the Benefit of Survivors will be promoted by the Publication of it; especially in that a double Pattern is here exhibited, eminently amiable and reverend, and meriting universal Imitation.

The Words of the Text relating to the Scripture-Nathanael (who, it's probably tho't was the same with the Apostle Bartholomew) appear'd so justly applicable to our deceas'd Nathanael, as pointing out the particular Genius & reigning Temper of his Soul, that they often occur'd to my Thoughts, when conversing with him in his Life; as they immediately did to my Rev. Brother on his Death: and they certainly afforded a very proper Theme for a Funeral-Discourse upon this Occasion.

I must acknowledge, Col. Byfield's known superior Worth loudly bespake all the Honours to his Memory proper to come from the

sacred Desk: and tho' some peculiar Reasons have for these later Years very much restrain'd me from bringing Funeral-Characters into the Pulpit, and may perhaps influence me for the future to be very sparing on this Head; yet I can hardly excuse my self, upon a cool Reflection, that I have in this particular extraordinary Case so much indulg'd my Inclination to Silence on such Occasions. He himself (if I mistake not) had an Aversion to pompous Descriptions in Funeral-Sermons: and it must be confess'd, they often carry too much the appearance of fulsome Panegyrick; adapted rather to display the Powers of the Orator, than the Merits of the Subject. However, in the present Case, where such a Variety of excellent Gifts & Accomplishments, where so conspicuous a Pattern of real Sanctity, and so long a Run of publick Service & Reputation concur'd, to furnish out a very lovely and illustrious Character; it might be thought, by such as have a just sense of his Value, a Wrong to the World, and an Injury to Religion, as well as Injustice to the memory of the Deceas'd, if his Ministers had forborn to drop a Tear over his Grave, and publicly recommend his Example. --- I willingly now take this opportunity to join with my Brother in doing it.

When I view the excellent and venerable Person, whose Death we are lamenting, and reflect on the several Parts of his genuine Character, he appears to me to have been very happy in rare Endowments both of Nature

ture and Grace, as well as singularly honour'd by many eminent Distinctions in Providence.

He is acknowledg'd to have possess'd a distinguish'd Furniture for the important Provinces he was call'd to act in: and steadily conducted himself in them, as much I believe as any man, by the Dictates of his Reason and Conscience, and a well-weigh'd Experience; and he was usually satisfy'd in his own deliberate Judgment: which ever preserv'd to him a peaceful Breast.

He had a Greatness of Soul, that made him scorn the mean Tricks of Craft, detest the little arts of Flattery, and hate a Bribe.

He was an admirer of Order & Decorum, and a proper Regimen in all Things: A shining Pattern of Sobriety & strict Virtue; of Industry; of punctual Veracity & Honesty; and of Liberality on various Occasions, for which he kept himself prepar'd by constantly devoting a certain Proportion of his annual Increase to pious & charitable Uses. One instance in particular (for its noble nature) deserves to be remembred; It is not long since he was at the Expence of an Impression of the Assembly's Catechism, which (to the number of Ten Thousand) he dispers'd in the Country Towns, where they might be most needed.

He was an Instance of early Piety: and his first Love continu'd & visibly grew thro' the succeeding Course of his long Life. He was a Man of Prayer, and much in Communion

munion with GOD; which they may deride, that are unacquainted with it. He was a careful Redeemer of his Morning & Evening-Hours for Divine Contemplation & Devotion in the Closet; a steady maintainer of good Oeconomy & religious Duties in the Family; a constant and seasonable Attender of the publick Worship; a conscientious keeper of the Sabbath; a diligent Reader of the holy Bible; a wise observer of Divine Providence; a Promoter of serious & profitable Communication; a faithful Reprover of Sin; a fervent Lover of Zion; a great Example of Patience and pious Fortitude under afflictive Trials, and always breathing the Faith and Hope and Humility of an improv'd Saint on a Sick Bed. --- Having had his Conversation in Heaven, and being satisfy'd with Life, he desir'd to depart and be with Christ: and at length finish'd his Course with Joy, triumphing in the near view and believing expectation of a blessed endless Futurity.

It remains only to ask the Prayers of all the Friends of our Zion, that GOD would pour out his Spirit, and be the Repairer of the Breaches made upon us, in the Deaths of pious & useful Persons; and to recommend the following valuable Discourse to the Divine Blessing, that it may be of use to all into whose hands it may come, to promote in them that Sincerity, which is here represented and exemplified, and which will secure to them the Approbation of GOD in this World, and a glorious Reward in the next.



almighty GOD diversely condescended on them.

THE distinguishing glory of Nathanael seems to have been his undivided fidelity, open temper and conduct, both towards GOD and man. His character upon other accounts,

Funeral SERMON.

in it, our SAVIOUR declares it out to be a standing pattern, worthy of universal imitation.



in the Bible records of this Nathanael, the only the place where he liv'd; besides which we find in the story, of which

JOHN 1. 47.

JESUS saw **NATHANAEL** coming to him, and saith of him, *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*

IF we take a view of those holy men of old, of whom we have an account in the inspir'd writings, we shall find a great diversity in their several characters. They are all represented as truly excellent persons: yet they shine with a differing lustre: some in a higher, and others in a lower degree of brightness; some in the glory of

of one virtue ; and others in the glory of another : according to the various turns of their natural temper and genius, and the gifts of almighty GOD diversely conferred on them.

THE *distinguishing* glory of *Nathanael*, seems to have been his undisguised, sincerely open temper and conduct, both towards GOD and man. His character upon other accounts, no doubt, was considerable : but this being one of the most eminent & observable strokes in it, our SAVIOUR singles it out to be a standing pattern, worthy of universal imitation.

NOTHING that I remember, is any where in the *bible* recorded of this *Nathanael*, save only the place where he liv'd * ; besides what we find in the passage of history, of which my *text* is a part : upon which account, we are at a loss to determine who he was ; from what particular family he descended ; what station he fill'd, or civil figure he made in the world.

ONE thing my *context* mentions worthy our remark ; That at the time, when our SAVIOUR bestow'd upon him this commendation, he was so far from being a *believer* in CHRIST, that he laboured of a very unhappy mistake with relation to his *Messiahship*. For when

* Which appears to have been *Cana* in *Galilee*, see *John* 21.2.

when Philip addrest him in that language, †
*we have found him of whom Moses in the
law, and prophets did write, JESUS OF
NAZARETH*: I say when he was thus
addrest, the common notion that then pre-
vail'd among the *Jews*, was the reply he had
ready at hand, *can there any good thing come
out of Nazareth?* This was certainly a very
great and dangerous mistake; and if Philip,
who was himself convinced that JESUS was
the CHRIST, had been of a warm temper,
and inclin'd to harsh judgment, he might have
censur'd him as one that had rejected CHRIST,
and was void of all sincerity & real goodness.
But if he had done thus, he would have been
greatly to blame; for at that very time, our
SAVIOUR, who knew the hearts of all men,
pronounced him *an Israelite indeed*. He was
satisfied the mistake he was under, did not
proceed from prevailing corruption; but want
of light: the evidence of his *Messiahship*,
having not yet been laid before him. He
therefore allows him to be a real saint; and
speaks very honourably of him: which I take
this notice of, to teach us moderation and
charity; and restrain us from attributing any
mistakes or errors, whither of faith or practice,
to the badness of men's hearts, which for all
any thing we know, may be consistent with
sincerity, and GOD's knowing them to be
real saints. But to return.

MY

A Sermon on the Death

† MY text presents us with a very fair and beautiful character: which may be depended on as an exact representation; since it came from one of infallible skill & judgment. And there is this extraordinary circumstance in it; Our SAVIOUR spake thus of *Nathanael* without any previous acquaintance; instantly upon the very first sight of him. A sure indication of his being *more than a man*! And it probably had it's influence upon *Nathanael* in producing that confession from him, *Rabbi, thou art the son of God, thou art the king of Israel*. He was sensible our SAVIOUR had no knowledge of him: and yet was conscious to himself, he had given the exact portraiture of his soul. And therefore rightly argues upon it, *thou art the son of God*. And from this time he became a *true Christian*, as before he was a *real Saint*.

TWO things are here said of *Nathanael*, in which his character is summ'd up.

I. THAT he was an *Israelite indeed*.

And

II. AN *Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile*.

ACCORDINGLY these are the two heads, under which I shall with all possible brevity, open to you this character: which when I have done, I shall more largely apply it in the best manner I am able.

I. HE

I. HE was an *Israelite indeed*. TOM

THERE is a twofold application of the name *Israelite*. 'Tis sometimes us'd to signify a natural descendant of *Jacob*, who was afterwards called *Israel*. So the *Jewish* nation are frequently called *Israelites*: and the most common name for any one of the stock of *Israel* was that, an *Israelite*. And in this sense, its likely *Nathanael* was an *Israelite indeed*. i. e. A true son, the genuine offspring of *Israel*; as immediately proceeding from him by natural generation.

But there is a far better and more excellent sense of this word. It often stands to specify the *spiritual* posterity of *Israel*, i. e. his children by resemblance, or participation of the same likeness of piety and goodness. Hence that of the Apostle † *they are not all Israel, which are of Israel*. He plainly distinguishes between *Israelites*, and allows the appellation in its *special* & *best* sense, only to those, who like their father *Israel*, are the subjects of real holiness.

AND 'tis in this sense *Nathanael* is here call'd an *Israelite*. And he is said to be an *Israelite indeed*. The meaning of the phrase put into literal english is obviously this, that he was a *real good man*; a *true Saint* and *faithful servant* of the most high.

NOT

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NOT that he was perfectly and indefectively so. In such a sense, *there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not.* He was therefore a *man of like passions with others*; had his faults and failings. But they were only the spots of GOD's children. He had notwithstanding a prevailing awe and reverence for the blessed GOD; an habitual love to virtue: and made it his careful endeavour to follow after it.

HE had upon his mind a realising conviction of future and invisible things: and it had a governing influence upon his heart and life. He was afraid of sin, and dare not *knowingly* allow himself in the commission of it. And if thro' mistake, or the prevailing strength of corruption or temptation, he was at any time led aside, we must suppose it only in here and there an instance: his general course being at the same time, in some good measure conformed to the great rule of duty.

THE principles of grace were certainly predominant in his soul; the reigning bent of his mind on the side of virtue: and such his manner of life, that he had the approbation of his conscience for his rejoicing; and could address the holy GOD in the language of *Hezekiah**, *Remember O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walk'd before thee in truth,*
and

* *Isaiah* 38, 31

of the Hon. Nathanael Byfield, Esq; 7

and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight ! Yet must we look upon him as deeply humbled and abased, when he consider'd how far he had fallen short of what might in strictness have been exacted of him ; and as having his hope not in himself, but the meer mercy of a most gracious GOD, thro' the promised Messiah and saviour.

THUS was he a *good man, a true Saint.* And O how beautiful does he appear in this view ! His greatest glory was his being an *Israelite indeed.*

POSSIBLY he was cloathed with civil honour ; posselt large intellectual endowments and liv'd in flowing outward circumstances : but 'twas his being a real holy man that render'd him far more great and noble : as he hereby resembled the infinitely glorious GOD, was conformed to the Image of the lovely JESUS, and became a temple of the HOLY GHOST. And O the inconceivable advantage of his being a saint of the most high ! By this means he became the delight of his maker, an actual possessor of that divine loving kindness, which is better than even life it self, and an heir to all the great and invaluable promises of the sure and well-ordered covenant. --- The great GOD was his GOD ; his guide thro' life ; his support in death ; and when his flesh & heart fail'd him his unchangeable friend and portion.

BUT, *II. HE* was an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile. An Israelite indeed was his general character, wherein he agreed with good men in common: but that more special glory of a good man, his being without guile, seems to have been that wherein he excell'd.

HE was without guile, the phrase must not be taken absolutely: for in such a sense, it can be applied to none but the perfectly holy JESUS, of whom 'tis testified, that he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. But the meaning of it is, that guile had not a predominant reigning influence over his heart or life: and not only so, but it may be expressive of the peculiar turn of his mind as open, plain and sincere; without deceit, craft and hypocrisie: which natural temper as sanctified and improved by divine grace, he was enabled to exercise upon religious principles and views, and in an uncommon degree, both towards GOD and man.

HE was without guile in regard of the blessed GOD. That is to say, he was a man of undissembled piety; a true worshipper of the true GOD; sincere in his profession of religion, and in reality what he pretended to be. Deceit and hypocrisie were contrary to the very bent of his mind, and above all things abhorrent to him, as terminated upon the heart searching GOD. He did not take up religion

as an outward form; he did not put it on for a cloak or disguise; he did not practice it out of meer fashion, to fall in with the custom of the people among whom he liv'd: but he had a real regard for the honour of GOD, and was heartily concern'd to recommend himself to the divine favour.

HIS chief aim was not to make a splendid outward shew, to appear externally religious, while he was inwardly full of hypocrisy and iniquity: but he was one that sincerely lov'd the day, the house and worship of GOD; and was a constant, diligent and exemplary attendant on it; and this we may suppose not only in publick, in the more open view of men; but more privately in his family, stately serving the LORD with his household; and secretly in his closet, when he had no witness but GOD and his own soul.

NOR did he satisfy himself with meer outward expressions of piety and devotion. He was chiefly concern'd about the inward frame of his mind; and accordingly was one who heartily lov'd and fear'd GOD: His trust in him; his belief of him; his dependance upon him; his resignation and submission to him, were all unaffected and without dissimulation.

THUS was he a man of *real* piety; without disguise or deceit; of no prevailing *guile* respecting his *maker*.
HE

HE was also *without guile* in regard of man. By which we are to understand "*The singleness of his heart, discovering it self in a constant plainness and honest openness of speech and behaviour*".

DECEIT and flattery were an abomination to him. He dealt not in empty compliments; meer pretences of love and friendship, cheating those he conversed with, with a shew of kindness, when he really intended none towards him; but his professions in this kind were sincere, and might with safety be depended upon. He was not an enemy in his heart; yet a fawning, deceitfull flatterer with his tongue: and what is not so very common, it might be known by his words and actions, whom he valued, when he was a friend, and to how great a degree.

He was not given to craft; and made no use of little tricks & fetches, to deceive others, and lead them into a wrong judgment of him. He form'd no design he took pains to misrepresent; he engaged in no affair, he made use of secret managements to conceal, or deceitful disguises to put a good gloss upon: but his actions were plain and above board; his conduct without intreigue, and those winding cunning devices, that often render men's behaviour obscure and unintelligible.

HE

HE was an implacable enemy to all lying, equivocating, and craftily imposing either upon the credulity or weakness of others, to the misleading or abusing them; was true to his promise, punctual to his engagements; and in one word, never liv'd under disguise; never walk't in an empty shew, making a false appearance of what he was not: but really was what he pretended to be; did what he profess'd to do; and constantly took care to make his words and actions, and their true meaning, keep peace with each other.

AND if from the freedom and openness of his temper, he sometimes disclosed those intentions *craft* might have concealed: or did those things in the open light, *cunning* might have kept hid from the view of men; he herein acted like a sincerely fair, and plain-hearted man: which is infinitely better in it self, as well as more honorary to him, than if he had managed with *that sort of policy*, which is evidently a fruit of darkness.

ALL which if put together, how charming is the character? how lovely and beautifull the possessor of it? and who can forbear saying? he was *so far one of the excellent ones of the earth.*

BUT I proceed,

II. TO make some *application* of this character, in *two words*, for our own use and benefit.

And

AND,

I. I may with propriety, take occasion herefrom, to *advise* and *admonish* those who are *wanting* in the *great point of sincerity towards GOD and man*. And this, not only because they are herein unlike *Nathanael* in that very thing, for which he is chiefly commended by our SAVIOUR; but because of the infinite importance of freedom from guile: it's absolute necessity in order to solid comfort here, and compleat blessedness in the future state and world.

1. I may reason a little with those who are wanting in the *great point of sincerity towards GOD*. And may it not be justly feared, this is the case of many? And perhaps there are those, who are so evidently leavened with guile respecting their maker, that they have no need of much time or pains, in order to satisfy themselves 'tis so; but can at once determine against themselves. They appear, it may be, in the habit of religious persons; they outwardly live as righteous men; they are exact and punctual in their regard to the externals of duty; attend the worship, and observe the institutions of the LORD JESUS; and this with external signs of devotion, reverence and affection: but yet, their own consciences assure them, 'tis all form and complement; meer shew & lifeless appearance. They know they have no real value for the honour of GOD; but their view is to recommend themselves

selves to men: they have no design to serve their maker, but use religion as a cloak to serve themselves.

TO such I can't help saying,

O consider ! seriously consider the dreadful folly of thus treating the infinitely holy GOD ! *He seeth not as man seeth ! but his eyes are like a flame of fire*, piercing into the inmost recesses of the heart : nor is there a thought there, but lo ! he knoweth it altogether. --- Our very souls are as visible to him, as our bodies ; --- and he constantly views them, and is perfectly acquainted with their most inward frame and temper ; with all their views and purposes, their motions & tendencies. That's the stile in which the glorious GOD is spoken of in the scriptures, *the LORD searcheth all hearts* *. Yea, he himself speaks of an *inspection* into *humane hearts*, as a glory that distinguishingly belongs to him, *I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins* †. What stupidity then is it to please ourselves with the thought of cheating our *Maker* with guile and hypocrisy ? Surely our GOD is not a man that we can impose upon him ! We are all open and naked before him, and let the mask we have on be what it will, he nevertheless beholds us as we really are. And while we are flattering him with our lips, or deceiving him with

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a false shew, shou'd not the thought, that he has a secret casement into our breast, through which every thing appears in its true light, dreadfully shock and abase us? If we would allow our selves only to realise this, hypocrisy would appear the height of folly; and of all Persons we shou'd be the most ashamed of ourselves, and cover'd with confusion, when we have dealt deceitfully with GOD.

BUT it may be our aim is, to gain a reputation among men, for our piety and devotion: *all our works we do, for to be seen of men*; to be applauded and commended by them. But suppose we shou'd compass this design; what is it more than pleasing our selves with vanity, if we are gratified with others speaking well of us, while at the same time we are conscious to our selves, 'tis beside what we deserve. Others applauding our piety can't alter our real character: we shall notwithstanding remain the same persons. And if when we are commended for our sincerity, we know in our own hearts that we are full of hypocrisy and guile, what have we to value our selves for? And instead of being pleased, have we not rather infinite reason for blushing, to think of our having mock'd GOD, to impose upon men?

AND the folly we are chargeable with, is exceedingly aggravated, if we consider the pains we must be at, to obtain this end, which
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has really nothing of worth in it. We must do every thing, at least in appearance, which a good man does; must attend the worship and ordinances of the gospel; must show respect to the day and house of GOD; must be exact in the performance of all the external duties of religion: and not only so, but must have a constant guard upon ourselves, lest we let drop our mask & discover our hypocrisy. And in the doing of this, what pains must we be at? perhaps much greater than need be used by men of real sincerity: for they are prompted to all they do, from a principle of love to GOD and his service; which makes every thing natural, and so easie and pleasant. Whereas what we do being counterfeit, every thing is a burden; and we must be in perpetual use of caution, or our guile will disclose itself.

NOW what greater argument of folly, than our putting our selves to so much pains and trouble, to so little purpose? especially if it be added, that the same pains if rightly managed, would in all probability, turn to our unspeakable advantage; the eternal salvation of our souls. For 'tis a most certain truth, that a person would be under the most hopeful prospect of getting to heaven, if he took as much pains for it, as some men do to make a meer shew of being religious.

BUT if nothing else will, O let the miserable end of hypocrisy convince us of it's folly! No sin is more odious in the sight of a holy GOD; nor will any one receive a heavier doom; a more severe punishment. Hypocrites are the persons whose portion it will be to dwell with devouring fire, to dwell with everlasting burnings †: --- 'Tis against this kind of sinners that our SAVIOUR has said, *Wo unto you, --- for ye shall receive the greater damnation**. --- Hypocrites seem to be mark'd out in scripture, for a most amazing destruction: their punishment represented, as it were, the standard of that full weight of misery, GOD will measure out to the greatest among sinners. *And shall cut him asunder,* and **APPOINT HIM HIS PORTION WITH HYPOCRITES**: *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth* ||.

O consider this, ye that use deceit with your maker in the great business of religion! Let destruction from his presence be a terror to you. --- Deceive not your selves, GOD won't be mocked. --- If you go on carrying it towards him with guile, *this shall ye receive of his hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow*. Ye shall have no hope, when GOD taketh away your soul: neither will GOD bear, when trouble cometh upon you. Yea though your excellency mount up to the heavens, and your

† Isaiah 33. 14. * Matt. 23. 14. || Matt. 24. 51.

your heart reach to the clouds; yet shall ye
perish forever like your own dung. ---

2. SUCH also may be admonished, who
are wanting in the necessary duty of *sincerity*
towards man. Alas! that this is so common
a fault in this day of prevailing guile. 'Tis
just matter of complaint, "that sincerity and
plainness are almost out of fashion; and that
the greatest part of the conversation of man-
kind, and of their intercourse with one ano-
ther, is little else but driving a trade of dissi-
mulation". How common are the sins of
flattery and deceit; discovered in the most
lavish pretensions to love, and friendship, and
a distinguishing respect, when there is little or
nothing in the heart to answer the true intent
of our words; insomuch that "our language
is running into a lie, the use of speech almost
perverted, and words made to signify noth-
ing". What tricking is made use of? what
crafty, underhand, sly, insinuating manage-
ments, in our trade and commerce with each
other? And how often is there a contradiction
between our hearts and tongues in our
engagements to one another? How many
allow themselves in making promises, they
have no intention to perform? and that they
forget as soon as they have made?

BUT certainly tis a vile shame it should
be thus. Let us remember; the GOD that
made us, and to whom we are accountable, is

GOD of truth. He never made use of guile towards his creatures, in any of his dealings with them, or declarations to them: but has always been plain and open; treating us with perfect sincerity, an absolute freedom from deceit. And as we are herein capable, in some good measure, of imitating the copy he has set us; so 'tis his expectation that we do so. And 'twill be an eternal reproach to us, if we are unlike him, practising dissimulation, falsehood and guile. Nor in this case, may we call ourselves his children. For those that are *born again, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD*; are his children by resemblance of him, in this moral part of his glory. And 'tis a sad mark of our being the children of another father, even the father of guile and deceit, if this wicked disposition of his rule in us; and we make it our practice to act contrary to the great law of integrity, in our treatment of one another.

AND as we call our selves *christians*, how ill does it become us to allow our selves in the exercise of deceit and guile? to flatter and cajole? and make use of the base arts of fraud and cunning in our dealings with each other? how contrary is this, to the temper and conduct of the *sincere Jesus, in whose mouth was no guile*. And with what impropriety, in this case are we called after his name, and denominated his disciples?

IN fine, the scriptures frequently mention this sin of guile towards men, and discourage the practice of it. ---- A special mark is set upon it, as a sin abominated by GOD. *The LORD will abhor the deceitfull man* †. --- 'Tis a sin, good men complain of, and imprecate the vengeance of GOD upon. *There is no faithfulness in their mouth; --- they flatter with their tongue. Destroy thou them, O GOD!* 'Tis a sin particularly threatned with divine curses: some of which, that they may make the deeper impression on us, I shall read to you in the words of the HOLY GHOST. Psal. 55. 21, 23. *The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oyl, yet were they drawn swords. --- But thou, O GOD, shalt bring them down into the pit of destruction: --- deceitful men shall not live out half their days.* Psal. 12. 2, 3, 4. *They speak vanity, every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips, and with a double heart do they speak. The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips; who have said, with our tongue will we prevail, our lips are our own: who is lord over us? Psal. 52. 2, 4, 5. Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs, like a sharp rasour, working deceitfully. --- Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue. GOD shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee*

thee out of thy dwelling-place, and root thee out of the land of the living.

BUT 'tis time I now proceed,

II. TO call upon us all to see to it, that we be men of sincerity; free from guile, both towards GOD and Man.

1. LET us be sincere towards GOD: making conscience of keeping our selves, as much as possible, free from that dissembling with the Almighty; which is so common in the world; and what we are all prone to, and apt to make too light of.

In order whereto,

LET us beware of taking more pains to seem to be religious, then to be really so. Thus tis with the Hypocrite. His concern is not so much to be truly *godly*, as to *appear* to be so: and therefore his pains in religion are chiefly calculated to this end; which if he can but obtain, he desires nothing more. But let us on the contrary, as we would approve ourselves men of sincerity, be concerned to be in truth pious towards GOD, and not meerly to make others think we are. Let us be careful to keep iniquity out of our hearts, as well as to hide it from the view of men. And let our pains in religion be chiefly intended, to please GOD and recommend our selves

selves to his favour, and not terminate in gaining credit among our fellow creatures ---.

ALSO, let us take heed of minding *only* the *outside* of duty, not regarding our *inward sense and feeling* in the performance of it. The man of guile concerns himself only with the externals of piety, not at all regarding his heart. He worships GOD outwardly, but has no inward reverence or esteem for him. If the duty be but done, no matter how, or in what manner. Let us therefore, if we would have upon ourselves the symptoms of sincerity, regard our hearts, as well as the external performance of duty. Let us, when we engage in the outward part of religion, take care that our souls be suitably affected; and not make it a matter of meer form and ceremony. Let us inwardly honour GOD, when we outwardly worship him, not suffering our hearts to be remov'd far away from him. And let it be our great concern, when we pray to GOD, or do any other duty more immediately relating to him, to experience with in ourselves the workings of love, fear, hope, faith or joy; not contenting ourselves, unless we have some motion of soul towards him.

MOREOVER, let us beware of restraining ourselves, in the observance of the duties of piety, to those only that are to be performed before others. This is the way of the Hypocrite: He limits his regards to those observances that
D may

may be seen of men; neglecting those that are secret, and to be perform'd only between GOD and his own soul. But let us as an evidence of our sincerity, extend our care to the whole of duty; observing those parts of it that are secret, as well as those that are more open. Let us do the duties of the closet, as well as those of the family, and house of GOD; and universally make conscience of those performances that are hid from men, as well as those that are most within their view.

IN fine, let us take heed of being govern'd in our piety, by carnal views and motives; making use of religion like the hypocrite, as a cloak for our covetousness, or some how or other, basely to serve our selves: But let us engage in it upon suitable motives; an inward feeling of the beauty and loveliness of it; -- a real regard for the honour of GOD; -- an overpowering sense of the divine authority, and the inviolable bonds of love and gratitude, we are under to GOD and the Redeemer. -- And let our aims be true gospel ones. Let us have a view to our selves, *i. e.* our own truest interest, the future glorious recompence of reward. -- But above all, let us eye the glory of GOD; making that the ruling ultimate end of all that we do in religion.

THUS let us be sincere with GOD. Tis what he really desires at our hands. Psal. 51. 6. *Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.*
Tis

Tis what he highly approves of, and will be peculiarly well pleased with. 1 Cron. 29.17. *Thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness.* Yea, tis what he peremptorily requires, and insists upon, and won't be turn'd off without. Joshua 22 5. *But take diligent heed --- to serve him (the LORD) with all your heart, and with all your soul.* And in one word, tis the very life and soul of all religion; a fundamental disposition, that must run thro' all the service we do for GOD: nor else shall we be accepted of him, or rewarded by him. Psal. 15. 1, 2. LORD, *Who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly; he that speaketh the truth from his heart.*

2. LET us be without *guile in regard of men*; strictly keeping ourselves within the bounds of undisguised plainness. Let it be our care to put on simplicity and uprightness. Let us be men of truth; of an unfeigned heart and open conduct. And at all times let us be sincere in our professions; without fraud or cunning in our dealings: upon all occasions discovering a true generous openness of nature, and integrity of disposition.

NOTHING will render us more lovely and beautiful. The man that is fair & open; of downright plain sincerity, both in word and action; How desirable is his character? How

honourable his name? Who better belov'd?
Who more generally esteem'd?

NOR will any thing more tend to our present benefit, than the constant practice of sincerity. Craft may serve a present turn; but as the wise man observes, *a lying tongue is but for a moment* *. Persons are seldom able to practice deceit long without a discovery: and then they at once forfeit their reputation, to their lasting disadvantage. This may be one thing implied in those *proverbs* of Solomon, *Bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel* †. *A flattering tongue worketh ruin* *. Whereas no one need fear any inconvenience by the practice of sincerity. For the more a man discovers of an upright heart, in a constant course of plain undisguised dealing, the more ready are the world to place their dependance on him, and to intrust their affairs in his hands: nor is any person under better circumstances to promote his own interest. Upon which account, a great man very pertinently expresses himself ||, “ I have often tho't that GOD hath in great wisdom hid from men of false and dishonest minds, the wonderful advantages of truth and integrity, to the prosperity even of our worldly affairs: These men are so blinded
“ by

* Prov. 12. 19. † Prov. 26. 17. * *ibid* 25. 28.

|| Dr. Tillotson, Vol. 3. pag. 10.

“ by their covetousness and ambition, that
“ they cannot look beyond a present advantage,
“ age, not forbear to seize upon it, tho’ by
“ ways never so indirect; they cannot see so
“ far as to the remote consequences of a steady
“ integrity, and the vast benefit and advantages,
“ it will bring a man at last. Were but
“ this sort of men wise and clear-sighted
“ enough to discern this, they would be honest
“ out of very knavery, not out of any love
“ to honesty or virtue, but with a crafty design
“ to promote and advance more effectually
“ their own interests: and therefore the
“ justice of divine providence hath hid this
“ truest point of wisdom from their eyes, that
“ bad men might not be upon equal terms
“ with the just and upright, and serve their
“ own wicked designs by lawfull and honest
“ means”.

MOREOVER, sincerity is of easie practice.
“ It is always consistent with itself, and needs
“ nothing to help it out: it is always near at
“ hand, and sits upon our lips, and is ready to
“ drop out before we are aware”. There is
no trouble in the exercise of it. — It needs
no contrivance, no pains to disguise or conceal it. — We have nothing to do, but
to act according to the real sentiments of
our minds. —

IN fine, the constant practice of this virtue
will give us boldness before the SON of MAN,
in

in that *day*, when every disguise shall be plucked off, and every man appear just as he is : when *the secrets of men shall be judged* ; and GOD will bring every work into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

NOTHING now remains, but to take some proper notice of the occasion, of my bringing you such a discourse at this time : the *Death* of that *Aged and Honourable* person, whose *Funeral*, we were, the last week, called to attend.

IT would be a great incongruity, just after a solemn discourse against guile and insincerity, if I shou'd allow my self, in saying any thing, either to flatter the dead, or deceive the living : and I think, I so far know my self, as to be assur'd, while thus standing in the presence of a holy GOD, I dare not attempt a representation, I had reason to believe was not true and faithfull.

I do not speak of him, as free from infirmities. For who among men can pretend to be without fault ? *If thou, O LORD, should'st mark iniquities : O Lord, who shall stand ?* The very best of us have reason, to make that acknowledgment, *Who can understand his errors ?* And to breath out the following prayer, *Cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

YET

YET I may with all freedom say, He was an *Israelite indeed* ; a good Man, a real *Christian*. Nor will it be denied, that freedom from *guile* was one thing, for which he was distinguished. In regard of the blessed GOD, his *piety* was undissembled : which he discovered in a flaming zeal for his honour ; a constant exemplary regard to his worship, both in the *closet*, the *family*, and the place of GOD's presence : where he set a good pattern of unaffected devotion, in his observance of *all* the institutions of the LORD JESUS. And in regard of *men*, few had their conversation more free, from that winding of the serpent ; that flattery and deceit ; that craft, shuffling and double dealing, that is so common among men. -- But I have no need to insist here, not doubting, your tho'ts were upon our NATHANAEL, while I was representing the *character* in the *text* : the application was so easie and obvious ; and I would hope, unexceptionable : having carefully avoided saying any thing, but what I tho't in justice belong'd to him.

BUT tho' his open temper, and sincerely plain and undisguised manner of life, was that wherein he excelled : yet were there other things in him, which ought not to be passed over in silence.

THE *Father of Spirits* was pleased to form within him a soul, much beyond the common

common size : furnish'd with large capacities ; a good understanding, a quick apprehension, a solid judgment : all which being join'd with a happy turn of mind, well fitted him for the many posts of honour, heaven design'd him for, and he was afterwards, in the several periods of his life, fixed in.

HE was of an extraordinary active, vigorous spirit ; and of such great natural courage that he never fear'd taking upon him, any service, he was call'd to in providence : and such was the firmness of his mind, that no man could better bare up under difficulties and discouragements. They scarce made any impression upon him ; till they came to lie so heavy, as to sink the spirits of most other men.

HE was well form'd for government : his speech, his behaviour, his very looks ; especially as joyn'd with a happy talent of turning them this way, were adapted to command respect and reverence. He had himself a great veneration for authority, and a strong disposedness to promote the same in others : was a lover of good order ; in maintaining of which, his zeal and care were particularly commendable, in the OEconomy of his family : where every thing was managed with the nicest exactness ; every one moving in a known sphere, with a becoming decency and regularity : more especially in that part of his life, when his

his business requir'd a numerous train of servants.

He was one of good elocution : could speak well ; with propriety and fluency. And perhaps few, on a sudden, could express themselves with more pertinency ; greater freedom, connection or clearness.

HE was of a catholick spirit : not confin'd in his charity within the limits of a party ; but heartily lov'd and honour'd all good men, however differing from him in matters of less importance. He greatly desired the establishment of these churches, and their abounding in the fruits of righteousness ; as being of their profess'd principles, and preferring their manner of worship : yet was he far from placing religion in any *particular form*, either of *worship or discipline* ; believing with the great Apostle, that *the kingdom of GOD is not meat and drink ; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.*

HE was upon principle, a man of charity ; had seriously weigh'd the obligations to this duty, and the proper measure in which it ought to be exercised : and according to his best judgment had form'd a *rule* to himself, which for *forty years*, he inviolably kept to : constantly paying (for that was the phrase he was wont to use) such a proportion out of his estate ; which whatever it was ordinarily, it once happened, within *my knowledge*, in the course of

one year, to amount to some hundreds of pounds: with which, together with his other distributions, he often times refresh'd both the souls and bodies of many, that were in want. 'Twas his principle to do what he did, this way, in the time of his life; and therefore if he has not by his last will, made many charitable donations, he herein only acted according to his known settled Judgment.

HE had upon his mind an uncommon conviction of the reality of invisible things, and a future state. Nor did I ever see the man, that was more free from the remains of unbelief; that had a more uniform, steady and unshaken faith, in the *Gospel Revelation*. He never seem'd to waver or doubt; but was possess'd of a constant, firm belief of the things of GOD and another world. And he had the comfort of it, in the various changes and passages of his life; but especially at the time of his death: in the view of which, he was under no manner of fear; but seem'd perfectly resign'd to his Maker: free and willing, at GOD's call, to go away into eternity. And the testimony of a good conscience, was what supported him; a lively hope in the mercy of GOD, thro' a glorious Redeemer: And in the strong exercise of this hope and faith, his *body fell asleep in JESUS*, while his *spirit*, we trust, was receiv'd to the *spirits of just men made perfect*.

WE now heartily joyn, in lifting up our prayer to the GOD who dwelleth in the heavens,

heavens, that showers of divine blessings may descend upon the *children's children*! --And may you sincerely chuse your *father's* and *grand-father's* GOD, for your GOD! So will he be your never-failing friend & all-sufficient portion. —

AND may the breaches which a righteous GOD is making in this church of our LORD JESUS, whereby he is thinning our glory, and weakening our strength, be happily repair'd! And let there be no reason for that complaint, *the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart.*---

AND as our aged, venerable fathers go off the stage, O holy LORD GOD, *pour out thy spirit from on high*, upon the Sons of NEW-ENGLAND, that they may be qualified to adorn and fill up their places! --- that we may have our *Judges as at the first*, and our *Councillors as at the beginning*; all our *Officers peace*, and our *Exactors righteousness*.---

O *revive thy work in the midst of these declining years*! that we may do that which is right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that our fathers have done before us. -- Let us yet remain *thy people*! - So shall *glory dwell in our land*.

A M E N.

AN
ACCOUNT
of the DECEASED.

From the *Weekly News-Letter*, No. 1533.
With Amendment.

BOSTON June 14. 1733.

ON the 6th of this Instant, between the hours of 1 & 2 in the Morning, died at his House here, after about a Month's Languishment, the Honourable **NATHANIEL BYFIELD** Esq; in the 80th year of his Age: Having long been a great Ornament both of our Church and State.

His immediate Descent was from the Rev. Mr. **RICHARD BYFIELD**, the laborious faithful *Pastor* of *Long-Ditton*, in *Surrey*, and one of the *Divines* in the famous *Westminster-Assembly* †: His Mother being of the

† From Dr. Calamy it appears, He was one of the *elected* Ministers, and the *oldest* in that *County* in which he liv'd, that was *ejected*; that he afterwards retir'd to *Mortlack*, where he usually preached *twice* every LORD's Day, in his own Family, and did so the very LORD's Day before his Death. --- He further speaks of him as a Man of great Piety, Zeal and exemplary Holiness of Conversation; and as falling asleep in the LORD, in *December* 1664, *Aerar.* 67. I may add to this account, that the *Living* he was turn'd out of, was worth 400 a year Sterling: His leaving of which, for ease to his Conscience, was a good Sign of his having a real honest Heart.

the noted Family of the **JUKON's**. He was the youngest of *one and twenty* Children; and one of the *sixteen* that have sometimes followed their pious Father to the Place of publick Worship. He was born in 1653; arrived at **BOSTON** in *New-England* in 1674; and conceiving a Love to this Country, resolved to settle here: and accordingly married the following Year to **Mrs. DEBORAH CLARKE**, by whom he had five children: three whereof died in Infancy, the other two lived to be Married, the youngest to the late Honourable *Lieutenant Governour* **TAILER**, who quickly departed without Issue; the other to **EDWARD LYDE, Esq;** by whom she had five Children: Two of whom dying young, three only are now surviving, a Son and two Daughters.

He was formerly a noted *Merchant* in this Place; and soon after **PHILLIPS's War**, had the Honour to be One of the *four* Proprietors, and the principal Settler of the Town of *Bristol*; where he lived their Head & Glory till the Year 1724; when his advancing Age put him upon returning back to **BOSTON**, the Place of his first Settlement; and where he remain'd till he died.

Few have passed thro' a greater variety of Scenes in publick Life. In the *Field* he quickly arrived to One of the highest Places of Power. In the *State*, he was Honour'd
with

with many Betrustments; was in Commission for the Peace, and Judge of Probates; was several Times chosen *Speaker* in the Honourable House of Representatives; sat **CHIEF** *thirty eight* years in the Court of General Sessions of the Peace, and Common Pleas for the County of *Bristol*, as afterwards he did *two* years for the County of *Suffolk*; was One of His MAJESTY's *Council* for this Province a great Number of years; and had the Honour of receiving five several Commissions for Judge of the Vice-Admiralty, from three *Crowned Heads*, from King WILLIAM in 1697, from Queen ANNE in the years 1702, 1703, and 1709, and from King GEORGE the Second, in 1728. He was the *first* Judge under our present Charter; and never Once had a Decree revers'd upon an Appeal Home.

For his Character. --- Justice to his Memory requires it should be said, --- He was greatly valued and honoured by those acquainted with him, for his superiour Genius and Abilities; his great natural Courage, Vigour and Activity; his plain, unaffected, cheerful and instructive way of Conversation; his catholic Spirit; his real Integrity, and unquestionable Faithfulness and Honesty; his Zeal against Sin, and to maintain public Peace and good Order; his strict Regard to the Worship of GOD, and constant, devout and exemplary Attendance on it, both in Public and Private; and in one word, his
love

Love to the Ministry, the Churches, and Civil and Religious Interests of this People : All which being United in the same Person, and in an eminent Degree, as it rendered his Life an extensive Blessing, so his Death just matter of general Lamentation.

He lived with the Wife of his Youth 'till 1717, upwards of forty Years ; and the following Year Married Mrs. SARAH LEVERETT, youngest Daughter to the Honourable Governor LEVERETT, with whom he liv'd 'till 1730 : when he was again left a sorrowful Widower. He died with great inward Peace and Serenity of Soul : and was honourably interr'd last Monday, a Funeral-Prayer being first made by the elder Pastor of the Old Church, to whose Communion he belong'd. He has left his Grandson, BYFIELD LYDE Esq; (Son in Law to his Excellency Governor BELCHER) Heir to the Bulk of his Estate.

F I N I S

to the following, the Trustees, and Civil
and Religious leaders of this People : All
which being united in the same Person, and
in an ancient Degree, as it rendered his life
an ever new blessing to his Death just
ter of great estimation.

He lived with the Wife of his Youth till
1717, upwards of 100 years; and the fol-
lowing Year Married MRS. SARAH LEEVE.
He had a daughter called the Honorable
Gentle, ALBERT, with whom he lived
till 1730; when he was again left a widow.
In 1730, he died with great inward
Peace and serenity of soul; and was in non-
solvity buried last Monday, a Funeral-Travel
being sent made by the elder Peter of the
Old Church, to a place where he belonged.
He has left behind him a son, JAMES
BELLCHER, who is now in the University of
Harvard.

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